(vi) Carryout door-step delivery of PDS commodities to fair price shops.

(vii) Ensuring timely availability of and issuance of foodgrains by fair price shops.

(viii) Creating awareness among public about PDS operations, training Vigilance Committees of intricacies of PDS operations.

(ix) Making fair price shops financially viable entities-allowing them to sell non PDS items etc.

Procurement of Wheat

1589. SHRIMATIBRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

what is wheat production and procurement in 2004-05. 2005-06 and 2006-07;

the root causes for decline in wheat procurement in the country; and

the details of the steps taken by Government to improve the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) The production of wheat in 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 and procurement in the corresponding Rabi Marketing Seasons (RMS) in the country is as follows:

(in lakh tonnes)

Crop Year	Production	Corresponding RMS	Procurement
2004-05	686	2005-06	147.9
2005-06	694	2006-07	92.3
2006-07	758	2007-08	111.3

(b) Th? main reasons for low procurement in RMS 2006-07 were less than targeted production, less market arrivals, negative market sentiments, high open market prices and high private participation. In RMS 2007-08 procurement of wheat was low on account of low market arrivals, high private participation and the possibility that a large number of farmers held back stocks in expectation of higher prices in later part of the year.

(c) Steps taken by the Government to improve procurement of wheat in RMS 2008-09 are as follows:—

(i) The MSP for wheat has been fixed at Rs. 1000 per quintal for RMS 2008-09, are increase of Rs. 250 per quintal over the MSP fixed for RMS 2007-08, in order to encourage farmers to increase their production of wheat.

(ii) Import of 18 lakh tonnes of wheat was done in 2007-08 which improved the stock position of wheat in the Central Pool and the wheat stocks (as on 1.4.2008) is estimated to be more than the buffer norms of 40 lakh tonnes at the start of RMS 2008-09.

(iii) Wheat export on private account have been banned tiil further orders. Wheat export from Central Pool is also banned.

(iv) A notification titled "Wheat (Stock Declaration by Companies or Firms or Individuals) Order 2008" has been issued under the Essential Commoditieis Act 1955 on 11.2.2008.

The order provides that any company or firm or individual which purchases wheat beyond 10,000 tonnes during 2008-09 shall furnish a return to Secretary, Food of the State from where maximum quantity has been purchased, while a return for purchase of wheat beyond 25,000 tonnes is required to be furnished to the Central Government.

(v) Department of Consumer Affairs has extended upto 31st August, 2008 notification under the EC Act enabling State Government to impose stock limit on wheat.

(vi) Import of wheat on private account at Zero duty has been permitted till further orders.

(vii) In order to encourage wheat procurement in States like U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Bihar etc. Commission to Societies/sub-agents has been enhanced to 2.5% on the lines of the Arthiya Commission in Punjab and Haryana for RMS 2008-09.

Save Grain Campaign

1590. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:
SHRl LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

the genesis/objective of Save Grain Campaign (SGC) and its achievements in Rajasthan;

whether there is no SGC office in Rajasthan;

if so, the reasons therefor; and

the number of farmers trained under the SGC in Rajasthan during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) With a view to minimize farm level storage losses, Save Grain Campaign (SGC) was launched as a pilot scheme in 1965-66 and operated as a regular scheme since 1969-70. The main objective of the scheme is to disseminate the techniques of scientific storage of foodgrains to the farming community by training, demonstration and publicity in selected villages. The achievements of SGC office, Jaipur since inception in Rajasthan upto December, 2007 are as under:—

SI. No.	Item of work	Achievements
	No. of farmers trained in stipendiary training courses	12700
	No. of storage receptacles fumigated for insect control	48015
	No. of houses covered under domestic rat control	81523
	No. of prophylactic treatment given	98462
	No. of non-metallic storage structure constructed	5116
	No. of indigenous storage structure improved	20664
	No. of metal bins provided to the farmers	25566